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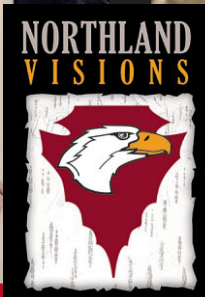
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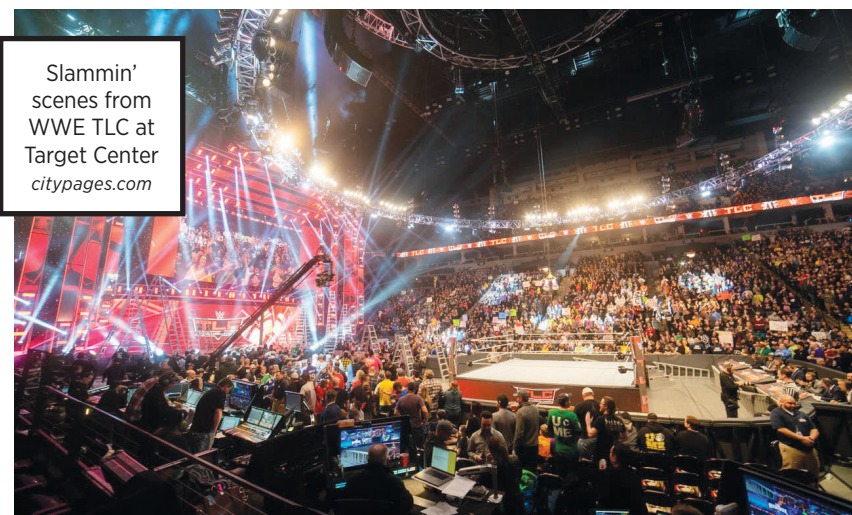


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THE SHORTLIST



Slammin' scenes from WWE TLC at Target Center
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DARIN KAMNETZ

THE STAT SHEET

27

Homicides in St. Paul this year that involved a gun, making 2019 the city's deadliest year for firearm fatalities.

10%

Support for DFL U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar among Iowa Democratic Caucus voters, a tenfold increase since October.

775

Refugees accepted by Minnesota in 2019. DFL Gov. Tim Walz has "rejected the intent" of a federal order allowing state governments to restrict resettlement.

54

Years in operation (1964-2018) for a Nicollet Avenue Burger King, which Minneapolis ruled could not reopen due to a ban on new drive-thrus.

"Twitter, the blood sport of social media where incels go for one last gasp of basement air."

Reader Anne-Marie Hoskinson responds to "MN candidate Erin Preese puts 'boobs' reply guy on blast" at citypages.com

TRUMP VS. THE VOID

MINNESOTA'S REPUBLICANS are so sure Donald Trump will defeat all comers in the state's March 3 primary, they won't even let anyone try. The GOP filed its election ballot with just one name, Trump's, mirroring similarly courageous steps in Kansas, South Carolina, and other states that simply canceled the vote altogether. Minnesota's ballot is being challenged in court, with (Republican!) attorney Erick Kaardal saying the restriction is "legally absurd" and "makes the state look really stupid"—no mean feat, considering Trump almost won the actual election here in 2016.

POPULAR STORIES AT CITYPAGES.COM

Minneapolis-St. Paul traffic **COMMUTES ARE LONGER** than ever

Minnesota man sues Blue Plate Restaurant Company over employee **WELLNESS SURCHARGE**

People keep **MIGRATING** to Minnesota—unlike the rest of the Midwest

Say hello to the Freehouse's beautiful new **'WINTER DOMES'**

Bob Kroll calls random Minneapolis man **'COWARDLY CUNT'**

BUSINESS SENSE

Inc.com: Minneapolis' startup climate not bad, but far from the best

If you're looking for a new base of operations for your next big idea, you could do worse than Minneapolis.

You could also do better, according to Inc. magazine, which teamed up with an "innovation policy company" called Startup Genome to crunch the numbers on which cities entrepreneurs should consider tapping into. Factors measured included deals for early-stage funding, population, and business growth, among others.

Out of 50 cities, Minneapolis came in pretty far down the list at No. 40, with minor credit given to the number of new businesses launched in one year, plus the ratio of funding deals and fast-growing companies to population. Even in those categories, its strongest according to Inc.'s data, Minneapolis didn't place higher than 15th.

At the top of Inc.'s list was Austin, Texas, followed by Salt Lake City, Durham, Denver, and Boise. Madison, Wisconsin

actually beat us handily at No. 18, praised for "bucking" Wisconsin's reputation for brain drain and attracting educated movers and shakers—despite low marks for job creation and opportunity share for the state at large.

The City of Lakes had a few points in its favor—established corporate giants like Target and Cargill, but also the startup programs branching off, hydra-like, from those entities. For example, since 2017, dairy mega-co-op Land O' Lakes has been running an accelerator for industry businesses hoping to expand. Agricultural giant Cargill and tech powerhouse Ecolab partnered to create something similar for food industry tech and reducing food waste.

The report also gave Minneapolis props for its women-centric entrepreneurial programs, with shout-outs to The Coven (a community workspace for women, femmes, and nonbinary folks) and Sofia Fund (an



Come piggyback on Minnesota's existing corporate giants and revel in our delightfully unsexy five-year business survival rate.

GLEN STUBBE, STAR TRIBUNE

early-stage investment firm for women-driven startups).

But moreover, one of the key things Minneapolis has going for it is its unsexy, unriskey business environment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics gave us a 54.4 percent five-year business survival rate, which happens to be third-highest in the nation.

Coven CEO and co-founder Alex West Steinman told Inc. there was simply less "tolerance" for risk here than on the coasts,

and maybe less of that "move fast and break things" attitude so common in disruptive new companies.

"I think some of that comes from wanting to build something that's going to be around a long time rather than what takes off like rocket fuel," West Steinman said.

You and your business can still get lucky in Minneapolis. Just avoid Uptown, which, sources say, is where businesses go to die. —HANNAH JONES

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NOTHING BUT HEMP

How CBD can help you through the holidays

The Christmas and Chanukah seasons are upon us, and as the year brings families and loved ones closer to one another, it also brings them closer to stress and anxiety. The end of the year is hard on people. Money problems, cross-country travel and personal issues with family can sometimes bring stress and worry to people and signs of anxiety like suicide rates tend to be higher around the holidays.

Amid these worrying aspects of a traditionally cheery time of year, there's no wonder why people might seek out-of-the-box solutions, but there are also less weighty concerns: What to think up for that hard-to-buy-for family member, for instance.

One avenue thousands will be taking this year is the newly-minted market for CBD products, fresh from a yearlong innovation streak after the substance was federally legalized with 2018's Farm Bill.

Scientific conclusions are far from evident, but early studies have shown connections between CBD and the body's endocannabinoid system, or ECS, to regulate bodily functions. There's even a prescription epilepsy drug based on CBD.

Meanwhile, ordinary people have found many uses for CBD oils, flower and other products. Testimonials show they love CBD for their anxiety, insomnia, chronic pain problems, inflammation and other common issues.

What any newcomer to the CBD market, especially this time of year, will notice is that it can be hard to tell quality CBD products from junk. With the surge in the market there are so many newcomers and gas-station cannabis experts that you'd almost think trust is a four-letter word.

Luckily, Nothing But Hemp has made a name in Minnesota and around the country for its educational capabilities and high-quality, lab-tested products.

Because of how variable hemp products and their manufacture can be, the Nothing But Hemp team keeps keep monitoring on all the brands and product lines it keeps on its shelves, hand-selecting the best in the industry and dropping products that don't keep up with their standards.

With brands like Charlotte's Web CBD, Plant Diva CBD bath bombs and Wyld CBD vaping products, there's something at Nothing But Hemp for just about everyone.

House brand Siskiyow Sungrown CBD is an Oregon-based farm-to-table brand that has repeatedly proven to produce some of the highest quality organic, non-additive CBD oils. Minny Grown CBD also shows Nothing But Hemp's commitment to local growers and business. With fine CBD isolates and full-spectrum oils, Minny Grown's flavors include pumpkin pie, spearmint and lemon lime.

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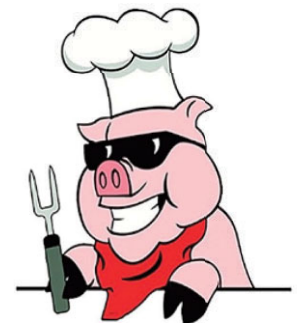
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The YEAR *in* FILM



Madison Curry
in *Us*

The horror flicks,
superhero sagas, and
naked mermaids
that made 2019
memorable

BY TONY LIBERA

This decade in film is hard to pin down.

Maybe it was the flood of superhero flicks. Maybe culture is so fragmented now that thinking about it in such broad terms is an outdated concept. Whatever the reason, things as a whole feel a little indistinct—but whatever the hell we're calling this decade was actually a fascinating time for movies. And while 2019 wasn't necessarily the most substantial year in cinema history, it was still a solid finish for an innovative 10 years at the movies.

This is 2019 in review.

Best Action Movie
*John Wick: Chapter 3 –
Parabellum*

At this point, I think it makes sense to separate superhero and action movies in our Year in Film issues. There's so many of the former we sometimes miss out on the chance to give a tip of the ol' cap to a movie like *John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum*, which is one of the more impressive recent action movies. Plot-wise, it's whatever, but it doesn't need a plot. From its opening fight scene—where Keanu Reeves' Wick uses books to murder Boban Marjanovic's character—you know it's going

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to be fun. Its insanely choreographed knife fight rings of classic Jackie Chan, and the ultimate showdown shatters more glass than Shaq and Sandra Day O'Connor combined (folks!). It's a wild return to classic stunt movies and a masterclass in fight blocking.

Best Horror Movie
Us

This might be the biggest toss-up of the year for me. Both *Us* and *Midsommar* are modern horror classics, so choosing between them kind of comes down to how you want to define the category. On one hand, I think *Midsommar* might have a slight edge holistically. It expands Ari Aster's macabre visions by moving away from the supernatural, and that grounding in reality makes *Midsommar* all the more unsettling.

On the other hand, there's some ineffable quality to *Us* that continues to creep me the fuck out. And if we're operating under the notion that scariness is a major factor in deciding a horror award winner, then I have to go with Jordan Peele's *Twilight Zone* riff. Also, *Us* is a phenomenal movie in its own right. It's skillfully crafted by Peele and maxed out with smart nods, jokes, and set pieces. And a second viewing makes it even more astounding.

Either way you lean, there's no question that we're seeing a renaissance in horror

thanks to filmmakers like Peele, Aster, and Robert Eggers. I'm excited to see how the genre changes in the '20s. (The '20s!)

Best Comedy
Booksmart

Booksmart got a lot of *Superbad* comparisons when it came out—which is fair—but this coming-of-age tale stands on its own legs. There are plenty of possibilities in the fish-out-of-water format, so the key to success for a high school movie is covering contemporary ground while tapping into some timeless spirit. Whether it's a budding lesbian romance, the 21st-century mechanics of *Lyfting* to high school ragers, or feeling alienated by your classmates, *Booksmart* does just that—and it's laugh-out-loud funny. The chemistry between Kaitlyn Dever and Beanie Feldstein is evident right out of the gate, and Olivia Wilde—in her directorial debut—handles good times and young ennui without veering into corniness.

Feel-Bad Movie of the Year
Waves

Waves is one of the best movies of the year. It's also one hell of a bummer. The tale of a high school wrestler pushed a little too far by his father and fate will obviously lead down some dark paths, but I don't think anybody was prepared for how rough this thing would get. Kudos



A24

to director Trey Edward Shults for ruining my night.

Best Original Soundtrack
Us, Michael Abels

Joker's Hildur Guðnadóttir deftly brings the grittiness of old-school Gotham and Arthur Fleck's descent into madness to life, but the visceral response Michael Abels' *Us* work elicits, even when you're not watching the movie, speaks volumes about the composer's effort this year. This shit's straight-up spooky. Add his twist on Luniz's "I Got 5 on It" to the mix and you've got a score that's more memorable than any original movie song this year.

Best Song: "Daily Battles,"
Thom Yorke and Flea
(Motherless Brooklyn)

This was not a great year for movie songs, but then it rarely is. And hey, this ain't the Grammys. Aside from Randy Newman's umpteenth *Toy Story* addition, the only noteworthy original was a song from Thom Yorke and Flea off the *Motherless Brooklyn* soundtrack. "Daily Battles" might be simple, but its sparse composition and plaintive tone melt together to form a little low-key magic. The movie itself was a big-time box office flop, so assuming you haven't seen it/heard the song, make sure you give it a listen. Even Thom Yorke haters can't bad-mouth it.

Head-Scratcher of the Year
Serenity

The bizarre early swimming scene should have been a dead giveaway that Matthew McConaughey's nautical noir adventure was going to be a weird one, but I can safely say there's not a soul on Earth who could've predicted *Serenity*'s twist. If you haven't seen it yet, you're not missing much, but the big reveal—that (spoiler!) McConaughey's drunken tuna boat captain is actually a video game character created by a dead war veteran's son—might be

one of the more puzzling moments I've had at the movies. It'd be bad enough as a closer, but we learn this information in the middle of the movie, which means there's a lot of time to sit and wonder how the hell this thing got made.

Best Superhero Movie
Avengers: Endgame

Was there any doubt? *Avengers: Endgame* succeeded as the end of a massive arc, but it was also an incredible sorta-standalone picture. Replete with star showings, dazzling special effects, and an emotional finale, *Endgame* furthered the reality that comic books and the stories therein aren't just for kids. It's the highest-grossing movie of all time and a powerful capstone to arguably the greatest saga in film history. I wish I could watch it for the first time all over again.

Most Shocking Nude Scene
The Lighthouse

Holy mermaid vagina, future Batman!

Best Original Screenplay
The Lighthouse,
Robert & Max Eggers

Few filmmakers write like Robert Eggers because few filmmakers study like Robert Eggers. It's most apparent in his dialogue, whether delivered with the 17th-century Yorkshire accents of *The Witch* or the old-timey sailor talk of *The Lighthouse*. That authenticity makes his movies stand out—how many period pieces have been ruined by horribly displaced or anachronistic Brit speak?—but his scripts are so much more than speech patterns. They're crafty character dramas rooted in and made better by Eggers' yen for accuracy. *The Lighthouse* is more of an experience than most movies for a lot of different reasons, but it all starts with his writing. As clichéd as it is to say, *The Lighthouse* really does transport us to a different world.

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High Life



Toy Story 4



A24, DISNEY/PIXAR

Best Sci-Fi Movie High Life

While it's technically a 2018 release, *High Life* didn't hit America until this year, so we're counting it. The story of a spaceship full of convicts sent into the unknown, *High Life* explores themes of violence, sexuality, and fatherhood while carving out a brutal spot in science fiction. Mashing up prison tropes with that of an interstellar odyssey brings tons of novelty. Robert Pattinson (another guy who had a great year) continues to show his chops and shake off his *Twilight* reputation, and Juliette Binoche, well...

Best Supporting Actress Juliette Binoche, High Life

I doubt Binoche will even make most people's shortlists for this award, but in my opinion, *High Life* shows her delivering the goods as the deranged Dr. Dibs. Smart, scary, sexy, sad—she does it all. *High Life* is obviously a space movie and flirts with enough horror that it doubles down on being a genre piece, but that should never be a knock. If anything, taking a character as strange and evil as Dibs and making her feel human shows just how talented Binoche really is. I'm here for you, Juliette.

Best Animated Movie Toy Story 4

It'll probably be a while before any animated feature lives up to 2018's *Spider-*

Man: Into the Spider-Verse, but man, this felt like a poor year for the category. That said, *Toy Story 4* shouldn't be discounted as some bland winner by default. Pixar's return to the franchise was heartfelt and often hilarious. Sure, it didn't need to be made given the third entry's perfect ending. But there was more than enough meat on the final snake-booted leg of Woody's journey to make *Toy Story 4* worth seeing.

Best Documentary Apollo 11

The best documentaries in any given year usually detail timely issues or shed light on some unfamiliar subject, but this year's best covers one of the most significant, well-known events of the 20th century: the moon landing. There's no narration or interviews, just previously unreleased footage and some artful editing by director Todd Douglas Miller. Sound and some simple graphics work to put you in the ship with our three intrepid astronauts, and though we'll never know the full extent of that experience, *Apollo 11* is about as close as any of us will get.

Best Cameo Keanu Reeves, Always Be My Maybe

Keanu was all over the place in 2019—*Between Two Ferns*, *Toy Story 4*, *John Wick 3*—but his appearance in Ali Wong

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1917



Joker

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and Randall Park's *Always Be My Maybe* was his most unexpected. The dude's famously nice, so it was a real joy to see him come out of nowhere and play a dickhead version of himself with such gusto.

Best Supporting Actor
Willem Dafoe, *The Lighthouse*

Period-accurate dialogue is awesome, unless your talent can't pull it off. In *The Lighthouse*, to nobody's surprise, Willem Dafoe smashes it out of the park. Embodying the role of surly one-time seaman/maybe-crazy lighthouse keeper, Dafoe runs the gamut from sad man-child to wrathful bastard. His ability to deliver such foreign English with such convincing ease makes me wonder if he's secretly an ancient mariner cursed to do movies for the rest of time. It's either that or he's a very good actor, but I'm leaning toward the former.

Most Disappointing
Movie of the Year
The New Mutants

The New Mutants was a huge disappointment. Why? It didn't even come out. Initially slated for an April 2018 release—yes, 2018—the folks at Fox kicked the X-Men offshoot down the road for what was sup-

posed to be a year. Well, 2019 came and went, and now we're allegedly looking at an April 2020 release. Yikes.

Best Cinematography
Roger Deakins, *1917*

There was stiff competition in the category this year: Rodrigo Prieto made vintage look modern in *The Irishman*, Robert Richardson captured a perfectly nostalgic style in *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, Hoyte van Hoytema elevated *Ad Astra* beyond its script, and Lawrence Sher surprised a lot of people with the gritty '80s reconstruction of *Joker*. For me though, Roger Deakins wins out.

I'm admittedly a freakin' for Deakins, but I don't think my bias factors in any more than usual here. His work on World War I drama *1917* is some of his niftiest thanks to the difficulty of its end goal, the presentation of one continuous shot.

The idea recalls 2014's *Birdman*, another best cinematography winner in my book. However, *1917* is in some ways trickier because it's shot almost entirely outside and therefore can't rely on hiding cuts as much. It's easy to write off as a gimmick, but it's so much more here. I wouldn't dream of ragging on *Birdman*, but *1917*'s one-shot decision feels much more motivated and therefore more impactful. Deakins pulls



CJ ENTERTAINMENT

off some gorgeous shots in spite of his constraints and helps make *1917* one of the more immersive war movies I've ever seen.

Best Actor Joaquin Phoenix, *Joker*

2019 was a bright year for starring actors, and it would be otherwise difficult to pick the best had Joaquin Phoenix not run away with it in *Joker*. Phoenix was already one of the premier talents of his generation, but his disturbing portrayal of a proto-villain on the rise may be his best work yet. It's not just the weird laugh or the sympathy he draws as lowly Arthur Fleck that make his turn memorable; it's the transformation from sickly, hunched wannabe comedian to confident killer clown. That profound physical change punctuates the actor's interpretation. Like Heath Ledger before him, Phoenix makes an iconic part his own.

Best Foreign Language Film *Parasite*

Spoilers: I chose *Parasite* for Best Picture, so skip ahead to read what makes this film so great.

Best Actress Lupita Nyong'o, *Us*

Oh you didn't think we could do it again? That's right, another horror movie wins the prize. I'm sure Lupita Nyong'o will get snubbed like Toni Collette did with *Hereditary*, but she gives not one but two amazing performances in *Us*. Both Adelaide Wilson and Red feel distinct, sympathetic, and frightening, with Jordan Peele's big twist showing precisely how first-rate Nyong'o's handiwork is here. As with the movie itself, a second viewing reveals her performance to be even more intricate. We need a rallying hashtag for this until horror actors start getting the recognition they deserve. Take it away, Twittersphere.

Best Director Sam Mendes, *1917*

It was only last year that I put forward the idea that Best Director and Best Picture are almost always connected. Well, consider this year an outlier.

1917 is a strong movie, but I don't think it deserves Best Picture. Despite its backdrop, the story's scope feels somewhat limited. There's nothing wrong with that, and not every movie needs to be some grand, meaning-laden achievement. But it's up against a couple heavy-hitters this year.

It's hard to argue with what Sam Mendes accomplishes from a technical perspective. I remember one of the *Bird-man* writers saying in an interview that "You have to be an idiot to do it all in one shot." He'd know better than most. The sheer difficulty of the feat combined with the set design *1917* necessitates makes this seem, from the outside, like a logistical nightmare. Yet somehow Mendes pulls it off with skill, style, and substance. I'm a guy who thinks *American Beauty* is one of the most overrated Oscar-winners ever, so that should tell you something.

Best Picture *Parasite*

Writer-director Bong Joon-ho's ingenious tale might play out on a small scale, but it's universally fascinating. It's silly and skeezy. It's a thriller and a comedy. There's love, death, treachery, hatred. It's so metaphorical. Above all, this grifter-family tragedy is an incisive look at the growing discord between the rich and poor in South Korea and across the world. Movies as different as *Joker*, *Us*, *Hustlers*, *Knives Out*, and *Ready or Not* all touched on class conflict in 2019, but none of them did so as thoughtfully and effectively as *Parasite*. There's been a lot of hype surrounding this movie, and for once it's well-deserved.

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ROLL WITH IT

The downtown Walgreens sells unexpectedly good sushi



LUCY HAWTHORNE

BY SARAH BRUMBLE

Sushi Takatsu is good. This much we know.

Each afternoon, hungry mouths in business casual queue up outside the counter-service joint to order from the compact menu of sushi bowls (rice topped with cuts of spicy tuna, salmon, yellowtail, avocado, tempura flakes, and drizzles of eel sauce and spicy mayo), various udon soups, oshizuki, and specialty rolls. Takatsu's seating is limited and the space is cute.

But we didn't come here to tell you what you already know. This is a story about what amounts to an open secret in the realm of skyway sushi.

Brace yourself for one of those sentences that will only further your suspicion that we must all be living in a Simulation. Nothing about it sounds trustworthy, and so, like any reasonable human, I ignored this information for as long as possible.

And yet here we are: Walgreens has very good sushi.

Over and over, like bothersome flies in an Emily Dickinson poem, people kept telling me this. Each time, the suggestion arrived in a tone of such earnestness and temerity that I couldn't entirely swat it away.

Still, it took months for me to find the chutzpah to procure some raw fish mere feet from a selection of antifungal ointments.

Outside Walgreens' doors, sandwich boards advertized "Hybrid Sushi:

Traditional style sushi with a modern twist!" It featured images of elaborate sushi platters surrounded by jasmine flowers and autumn's last leaves.

The actual selection left me woozy—in a good way. Arranged in coolers atop a river of faux ice rested poke bowls, a variety of spring roll wraps, 18-piece trios of rolls for under \$7, honkin' big rainbow rolls overlaid with lotus-pink tuna and striped salmon strips at only a fraction more, and four different Chef

Sampler combos. From atop the counter, a lucky cat waved at me next to bins of chopsticks, extra soy sauce packets, and napkins.

I asked my cashier if he stans the in-house sushi, and his arc to Walgreens sushi acceptance fit the building pattern: "When I first started working here I was kind of hesitant," he said. "But it's actually good. We sell a lot of it, especially during lunch."

I took my lunch with me because Walgreens has no seating. Why would they?

When I'd devoured exactly two-thirds of a Chef Sampler (figuring there was no point in half-assing an experiment in drugstore sushi by playing it safe with California rolls), I held a blind taste test with the rest. The unwitting subject, who's totally fed up with bullshit like this by now, begged for more. Walgreens' rolls didn't fall prey to over-saucing or too much tempura garnish,

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each raw fish's texture was perfect and lacked any undesirable "fishiness," and the rice was evenly cooked.

Four years ago, Walgreens first installed a sushi bar under a franchise agreement with the company AFC Sushi. If that name sounds familiar, look for their products at Kowalski's Markets or the General Mills and St. Kate's campuses. But don't expect them to measure up to Walgreens.

Approximately seven months ago, Thet Zin and Tin Tun assumed operation of the business inside Walgreens, where they delight in steering their own ship as much as possible. You'll find them behind the counter every day of the week (though the sushi isn't on sale on Sunday).

Zin explained that she and Tun like to get creative in their roles as downtown sushi chefs. "We change the pattern. We decorate. If we have more time, we make more [options] because our customers, they love it." The duo are happy to take special requests from regulars, and often do, but even their grab-and-go case is stocked with items that don't feel rote.

"When they see with the eyes the sushi is pretty, they can buy and be happy. We put more quality. The other sushi bar you cannot buy like this," said Zin, gesturing to a Chef Sampler that paired two rolls the size of tenderloins with four nigiri—two ebi, one salmon, and a tuna. "They would put only two nigiri. We put more. We put a lot of things, intention, and we control the quality."

Zin is happy to leave the more complex rolls to Tun, who arrived in the Twin Cities

Thet Zin and Tin Tun holding down their sushi counter

from San Francisco, where he trained as a sushi chef for five years. Still, the key to Walgreens' sushi is more subtle. "Most people like my sushi because the rice is not too hard and not too soft," says Zin. "It's really good."

Even in this, Zin is being humble. Her rice glows in comparison to most takeaway sushi, which has a reputation for tasting like it's been sitting in a vegetable drawer for ages. Beneath the nigiri, the rice is packed to just the right density, bearing remnants of Tun's finger imprints, and has the perfect amount of vinegar to contribute flavor to each bite, rather than act as filler.

Tim Morgan, a member of the Star Tribune's circulation department, has become an uncharacteristically outspoken evangelist of Walgreens' sushi, proclaiming its virtues loudly rather than in hushed tones. Morgan went on the record suggesting that newcomers to Capella Tower (a few blocks away from Walgreens) head to see Zin and Tun for their lunches.

"Because it seems so off the wall, I highly recommend Walgreens sushi," Morgan explained. "I love how people think you're crazy until they try it. It provides good value for people who try to keep a budget."

At some point, you'll just have to see for yourself what's behind all those whispers about Walgreens sushi. But if you still can't "risk" it, there's always Sushi Takatsu, which is a whole 'nother beast. 

"I was kind of hesitant. But it's actually good."

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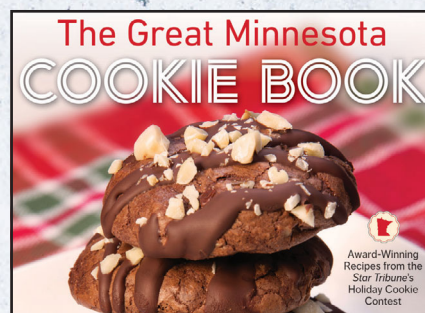
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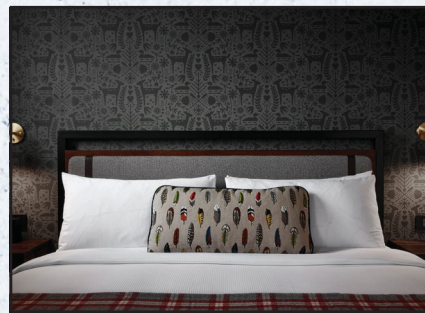
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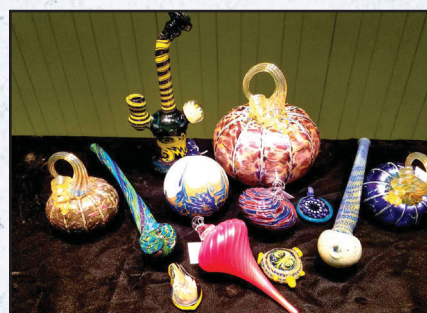
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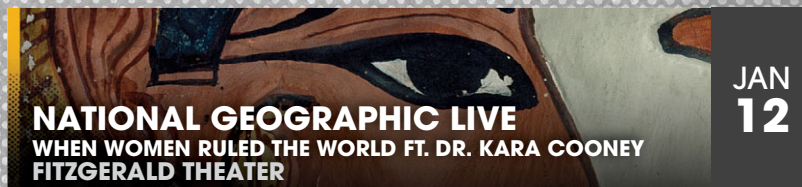
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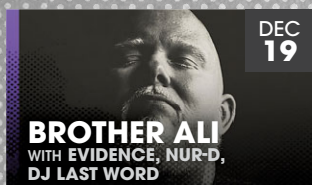
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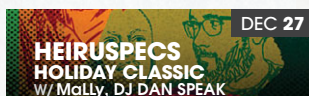
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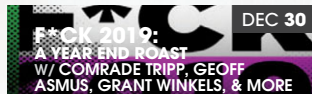
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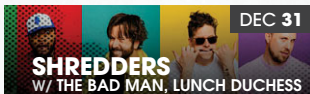
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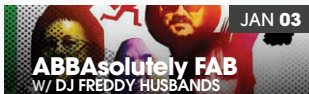
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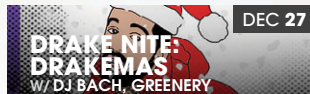
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In 1978, a holiday-themed *Star Wars* special aired on network TV. It was so poorly received that it disappeared for nearly 30 years, only to be unearthed decades later, thanks to VHS and the internet. Modern-day fans soon discovered what went wrong: It was merely way ahead of its time. These days, we revel in crap as much as we consume “high quality” productions. So every year crowds can—and do!—appreciate this so-bad-it’s-good masterpiece at BLB. The star-studded special features a dazed Carrie Fisher, an apathetic Harrison Ford, and Mark Hamill, who is looking a little... off. But the real focus here is on Chewbacca’s family, as they await news of whether or not he will make it home for the Wookiee holiday Life Day. Musical performers include Diahann Carroll, who sings a sultry tune for Chewie’s toothless dad, Itchy, and Jefferson Starship, whose lead singer really knows how to rock a phallic microphone. Bea Arthur shows up as a pissed-off intergalactic bartender, and Boba Fett makes his debut in a trippy cartoon short. Admission to each screening this Wednesday is a new, unwrapped toy to be donated to Toys for Tots. A collection of delightful *Star Wars* merch is often amassed at the front of the stage by the end of the evening, making this a feel-good event showcasing something great that was once believed to be terrible. 4, 7, and 10 p.m. Free with an unwrapped new toy. 810 W. Lake St., Minneapolis; 612-825-3737. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

POETRY

POETS & PINTS

SISYPHUS BREWING

Four poets and one visual artist come together for the latest edition of Poetry & Pints, an event that asks: Isn’t poetry extra enjoyable when you’re imbibing? The series, which began in 2014, is now



Riverview Theater screens a variety of holiday classics for a good cause.

A CHRISTMAS STORY, METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

presented by Cracked Walnut, a group that specializes in organizing readings in traditional and non-traditional spaces throughout the Twin Cities. Sharing poetry this Wednesday will be Valérie Déus, Wang Ping, Sonia Greenfield, and Mary Kane, and you’ll be able to check out the work of visual artist Brittany Bailey. In addition to the curated readings, there will also be an open mic; signup starts at 6:30 p.m. 7 to 10 p.m. Free. 712 Ontario Ave. W., Minneapolis; 612-444-8674. —SHEILA REGAN

COMEDY

MIKE E. WINFIELD

ACME COMEDY CO.

Mike E. Winfield has such a big smile you can not only visualize it over the phone, you might even be able to picture it just by reading this piece. “There’s a lot to be joyful about,” he reports. “About two months ago my

special, *Stepman*, was released on Amazon Prime.” He’s already seeing more people at his shows, and his calendar is filling up. “I’m also having great meetings with some bigwigs in the business.” Now, though, he needs to come up with a new hour. “I’ve always considered myself to be prolific,” he says, “so now I do have a new hour. It just needs more reps and more potency. I’m also taking different turns in standup.” Winfield used to be a set-up/punchline type of comic. “Now I’ve transitioned into stories about things that are relevant to what’s going on in my life.” Married, with one child, he hasn’t seen the increased roadwork have a negative effect on his home life. “My wife just got the floors done in our house,” he says. “She wants to get more projects done, so now she’s like, ‘What do you have coming up?’” 8 p.m. Wednesday

through Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$15-\$20. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393.

Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON

THURSDAY 12.19

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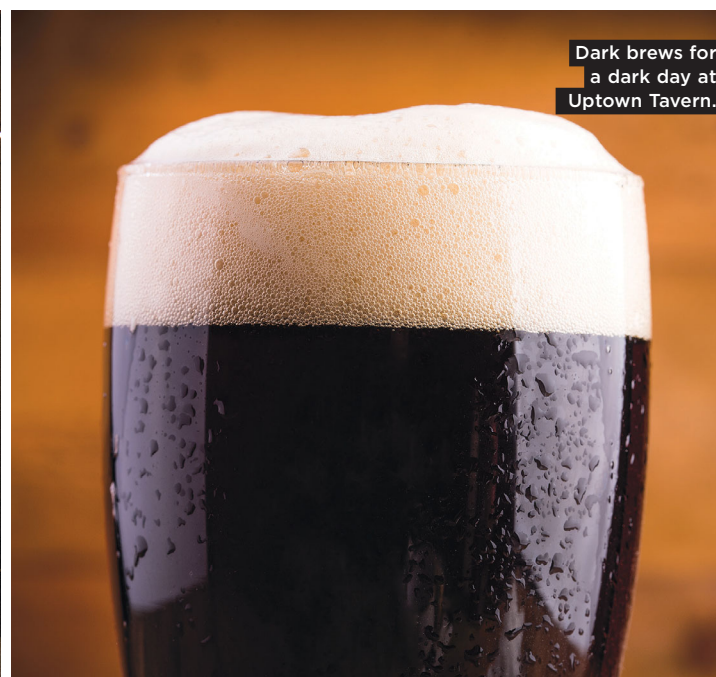
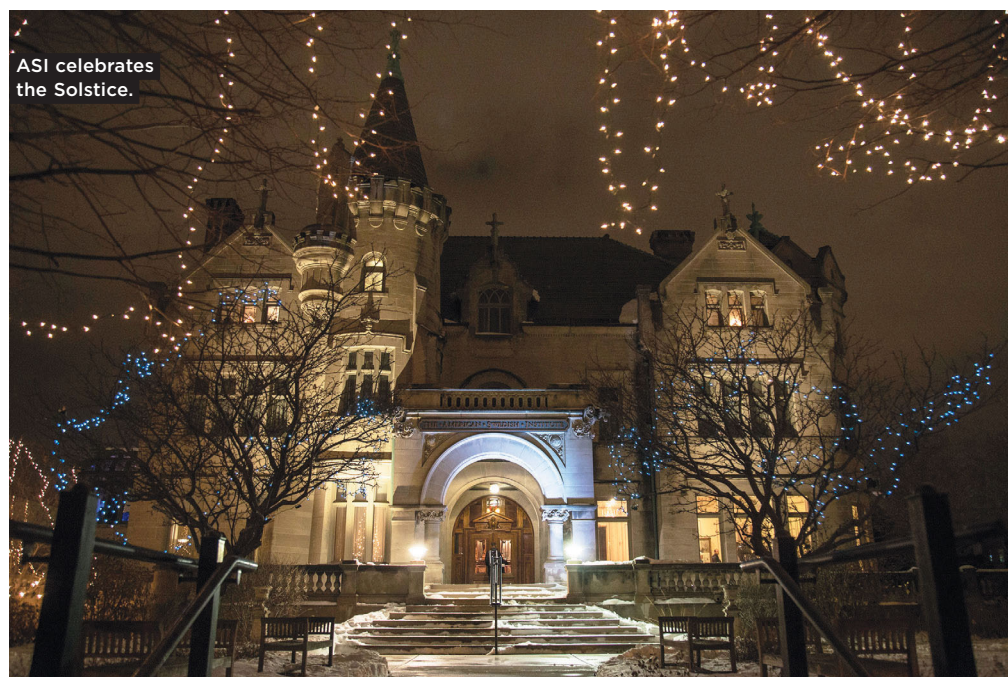
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AMERICAN SWEDISH INSTITUTE; GETTY

CONTINUED FROM THURSDAY ►

different varieties of their baked goods. Instead of spending the weekend in the kitchen, meet some friends, drink some beers, and come home with this year's holiday cookies ready to be served with no extra work. 4 to 10 p.m. Free. 2821 E. Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-722-7222. —LOREN GREEN

COMEDY

CHRIS FRANJOLA

RICK BRONSON'S HOUSE OF COMEDY

Many comedians long for steady TV work so they can get off the road. Chris Franjola is kind of the opposite. While he's currently working on several TV shows as a writer, including *Lights Out with David Spade*, the veteran standup is itching to get up in front of more audiences across the country. "I'm doing a lot of travel-related stories and stuff about my family," he explains. "I'm enjoying standup more than I ever have." Politics is one thing he's steering clear of. "I do a little on my podcast, *Cover to Cover*, but not in my act really," he says. "I was doing it, but it's a no-win situation, and I wasn't getting big enough laughs to justify dividing half the room. It just wasn't worth it." Having worked on *Chelsea Lately* and now *Spade's show*, he knows there are other areas to mine for comedy, like sports and entertainment. "The whole Lori Loughlin getting her daughter into USC was one we could all have a good time with," he notes. 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday; 9:45 p.m. Friday; 7 and 9:30 p.m. Saturday.

\$16-\$23. 408 E. Broadway, Mall of America, Bloomington; 952-858-8558. **Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON**

FRIDAY 12.20

HOLIDAY

WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

AMERICAN SWEDISH INSTITUTE

Marking the date during which the angle of the Earth is tilted enough to produce the longest night of the calendar year, the Winter Solstice also signifies the moment from which the amount of daily sunlight begins to steadily increase. Such an occasion calls for jubilation, as reflected by the Nordic-inspired Winter Solstice Celebration at the American Swedish Institute. Guests are welcome to stroll the grounds and take self-guided tours of the popular holiday-decorated rooms. Along the way, visitors will be serenaded by folk music ensemble Nyckelharpalag, the Hunky Dory Scandinavian All Stars, and the Romanian Duo. The mansion will also host family-friendly activities such as creative crafting; shadow selfies; a book signing by Lori Evert, author of *The Christmas Wish*; and a performance of *Wise One*, a musical folktale by theater troupe Impossible Salt. Once outside, guests will have the chance to encounter live reindeer before settling in at a warming bonfire with gourmet s'mores and a traditional glass of glogg. 6 to 10 p.m. \$5-\$15. 2600 Park Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-871-4907. —BRAD RICHASON

FILM

CHRISTMAS AT THE RIVERVIEW

RIVERVIEW THEATER

Every Christmas, the Riverview eschews current holiday blockbusters for a few days of classic movies. Things kick off with *Elf*, a film about a grown man (Will Ferrell) who was raised by elves at the North Pole. Things get more complicated when he sets out on his own in search of his biological family in New York City (4:20 p.m. daily Friday through Monday). *A Christmas Story* is the touching tale of Ralphie, a kid who really wants a BB gun from Santa (6:30 p.m. daily from Friday through Monday). *It's a Wonderful Life* is all about appreciating what you have, and supporting people in your community (8:30 p.m. daily from Friday through Monday). Finally, *White Christmas* gives Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney the perfect excuse to get dressed up and perform holiday tunes (2 p.m. daily from Saturday to Monday). Admission to each screening is a mere \$2, or \$1 if you bring a non-perishable food donation. Items collected and a portion of the proceeds from ticket sales will benefit the Minnehaha Food Shelf. 3800 42nd Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-729-7369.

Through Monday —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

SATURDAY 12.21

HOLIDAY

CHRISTMAS AT THE HAUS

BAUHAUS BREW LABS

This Saturday Bauhaus celebrates Christmas, offering festivities

throughout the day for folks of all ages. For the kids, Santa will be stopping by from noon to 2 p.m., sharing joy and taking any last-minute gift requests. There will also be coloring sessions for all who enjoy a calming moment with some crayons. Gerhard's Brats will serve up eats during the day, and people who bring in a new toy to donate to families in need will score a free beer in return. Meanwhile, DJ Shane David Kramer will spin holiday hits starting at 7 p.m. Noon to 11 p.m. Free. 1315 Tyler St. NE, Minneapolis; 612-276-6911. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

HOLIDAY

DARKEST DAY CELEBRATION

UPTOWN TAVERN & ROOFTOP

The sun will set at roughly 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, the shortest day of the year. That's about seven fewer hours of daylight than the Twin Cities saw each day in June. But Uptown Tavern will have everybody seeing darkness even earlier at its annual Darkest Day of the Year party. The tap takeover officially begins at 1 p.m., with all 30 taps dedicated to dark—often quite rare—beers that are the color of midnight. Find barrel-aged locals like Surly's Darkness, Bent's Double Shot Double Black, and Summit's Dark Infusion, plus exciting national beers from Toppling Goliath (Morning Delight), Firestone Walker (Anniversary XXII), Dogfish Head (World Wide Stout), the Bruery (Bakery Coconut Macaroons), and more. If flights and pints aren't

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 ►

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CLUB KIDDO

CONTINUED FROM SATURDAY ►

enough, the heated patio will serve bourbons from Pappy Van Winkle and the Buffalo Trace Distillery's Antique Collection. Noon to 2 a.m. Free. 1400 Lagoon Ave., Minneapolis; 612-824-3333. —LOREN GREEN

SUNDAY 12.22

HOLIDAY THE 6TH ANNUAL FESTIVUS CELEBRATION

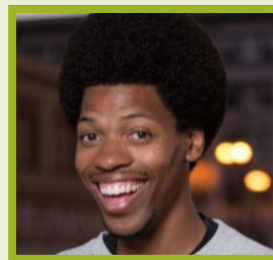
FAIR STATE BREWING COOPERATIVE
Whereas the origins of most holiday rituals are shrouded in archaic mythologies, the anti-consumerist celebration known as Festivus can be traced to a contemporary source, the enduringly irreverent sitcom *Seinfeld*. Inspired by the actual family practices of Dan O'Keefe, one of the show's writers, the mock holiday was memorably introduced to the world by the perpetually aggrieved Frank Costanza. Today, it serves as an antidote to the maddening pressures of the yuletide season. The holiday "for the rest of us" has long since transcended its satirical origins, having been embraced by the disenchanted. The annual Festivus Celebration at Fair State Brewing Cooperative possesses a cathartic quality, giving participants the chance to vent their holiday frustrations to a supportive audience, as part of the Airing of the Grievances. Should the repressed angst be strong enough

to require a more physical outlet, the celebration also encourages participants to take on the Feats of Strength (usually presented as an arm or thumb wrestling challenge). For those who would rather hang back by the unadorned aluminum pole and cheer on the revelry, Fair State Brewing will offer a full array of delicious libations to accompany the anti-holiday shenanigans. 7 to 10 p.m. Free. 2506 Central Ave. NE, Minneapolis; 612-444-3209. —BRAD RICHASON

HOLIDAY LAST CALL: A HOLIDAY MARKET

FOOD BUILDING
Well dang. So you waited until the last minute to pick up your final gifts, and now you're panicking. Don't head over to Target or the Mall of America yet; you may find what you need at a far more chill event this Sunday at the Food Building. Here you can shop local wares while enjoying cocktails, beer, and more. Gift foodie friends with items from Alemar Cheese, Red Table Meat Co., and Anton Wolf's Hot Sauce. Score points with your goth cousin with a surprise from 3 Jag Designs, which sells rad knife-shaped necklaces. Your sassy friend should dig a variety of pins from Gigi's Flair Emporium, and you can keep your mom cozy this winter with something from QuiltKween. Vintage clothing, handmade jewelry, and beauty products round out the lineup. 3 to 8 p.m. Free. 1401 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis; 612-545-5555. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

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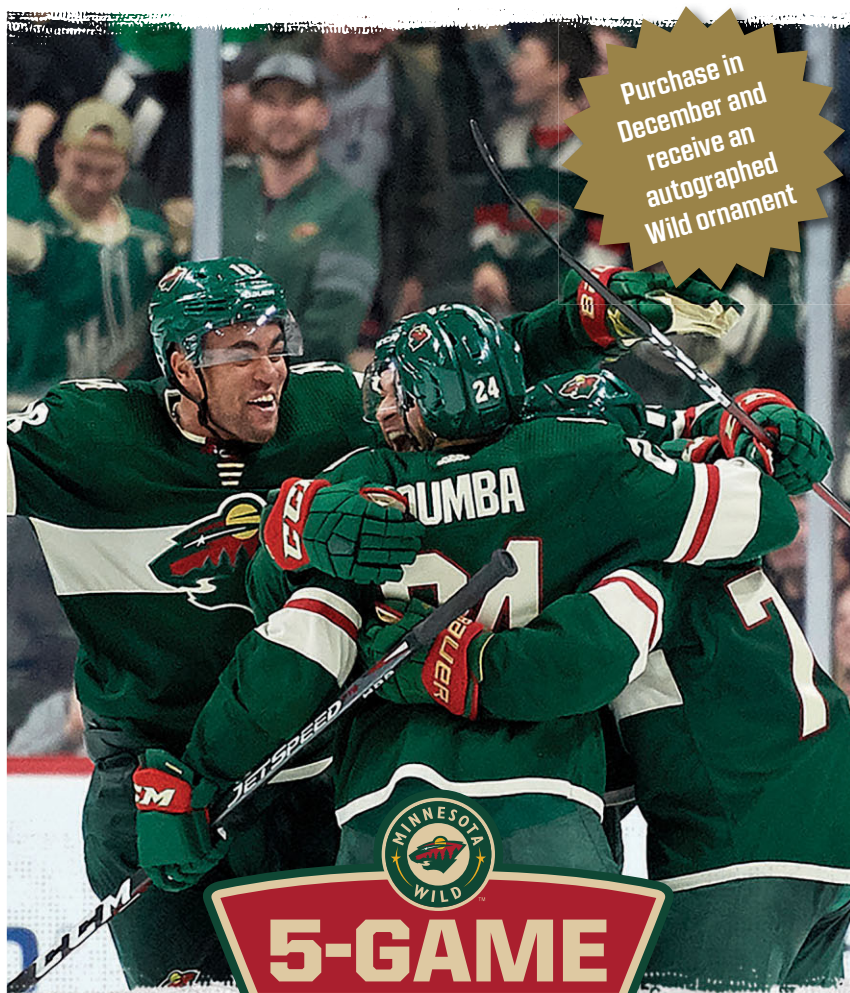
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THE DECADE IN THEATER

New leaders, #MeToo, and more POC visibility defined the '10s



MU/JUNGLE/GUTHRIE

BY JAY GABLER

From the outside, the 2010s in Twin Cities theater haven't seen any changes as visible as the Guthrie's 2006 move to its big blue riverfront home. The view from theaters' seats, though, has changed significantly—a result of even more dramatic shifts behind the scenes.

This decade saw a sea change in the leadership of local theaters, with new artistic directors taking the helm at the Guthrie, Penumbra, the Jungle, Theatre Mu, Park Square, Ten Thousand Things, and elsewhere. The shift is generational, but it's also marked a fundamental shift in focus as Twin Cities theaters recognize the need to tell stories that much more authentically and extensively reflect the diversity of their communities.

"I have been thrilled to see women and [people of color] assuming leadership roles in our theater community," says actor and director Austene Van. "These changes have allowed audiences to see images and artists of various cultures that are not frequently seen on our stages. These changes have allowed our audiences to experience relatable stories through diverse lenses."

Sun Mee Chomet agrees. "It has been wonderful to see diversity celebrated on

stages throughout the Twin Cities. As an Asian American actor, there have been many doors that have opened at theaters like the Jungle and the Guthrie that did not feel as wide open 10 years ago for actors of color." What's more, Chomet adds, "I've also seen much more opportunity for directors, designers, and technicians that are people of color, women, and non-binary-identifying folks."

"As an Asian American actor, there have been many doors that have opened."

As the worldwide #MeToo movement has heightened the visibility of exploitative behavior in the arts, the Twin Cities theater community has also begun a reckoning. One major leadership transition (at Mu) came about as a result of #MeToo-related issues, and a judge asked the Guthrie to admit that its staff had inappropriately retaliated against a carpenter who called out a sexist environment in the scene shop. New lawsuits are forcing the Children's

Lily Tung Crystal (Mu), Sarah Rasmussen (Jungle), and Joseph Haj (Guthrie) were new faces in town.

Theatre Company to publicly grapple with a shocking history of past abuse.

One important change at local theaters, says actor and director Luverne Seifert, protects performers onstage. "The biggest change I've seen is the emergence of the intimacy director, who is essentially a choreographer for sexual contact. It's a good change because it provides a clear physical sequence that the stage manager can identify and address if the behavior changes in a performance. It protects vulnerable actors from aggressive scene partners because everyone is aware of the lines that shouldn't be crossed."

Changes in funding structures and audience expectations will continue to drive shifts onstage and behind the scenes in the 2020s. One thing that probably won't change, despite occasional experiments: the request that audience members pocket their phones when the show begins, so as to be completely present in the room. The essential magic, and perennial challenge, of live theater remains the same. In Chomet's words, "We have been tasked with preserving the reflection of the human condition."

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PLAY, WIN, AND HAVE FUN!
 MINNESOTA'S LARGEST PULL TABS

BY JIM WALSH

An indie rock band touring in a van is an eternally heroic and romantic notion, so it was a treat to catch Little Fevers on a co-bill with their Chicago-based honky-tonk friends Razor Shines at Montrose Saloon last summer. Both bands ripped the corner joint with sly melodies, smart songs, and an unmistakable just-another-Sunday-night-in-Chicago underground élan. Afterward the musicians hung out and swapped road tales, including one from the night before in Cleveland, where Little Fevers couldn't find a hotel room due to something called the Twins Day Festival.

"Everyone was in Ohio for a people-who-are-twins convention," says Little Fevers singer/songwriter Lucy Michell with a laugh, sitting with her bandmate, bassist Eamonn McLain, in the living room of her family's home in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood. "Everything was booked with 'No Vacancy' signs everywhere, so I walked up to a person at our show and said, 'Do you guys have any spots where we could stay?' She was like, 'Um, no.' So it was back in the van. And that's the way we used to do it with [their previous band] the Velvet Lapelles. We'd end up in the weirdest places. I think I slept in a dog bed one time."

The after-show scene in Chicago was reminiscent of so many that happen regularly in music clubs, and that fleeting but as-good-as-it-gets camaraderie is a big reason why people are drawn to music, and the road. Anyone who has played or sung or written music, or has been part of a particularly transcendental live music audience, knows what a multi-dimensional human experience that is. Communion is created, the flesh and blood and spirit feel enriched, and an all-togetherness is achieved in a way that never otherwise occurs. But when the last note drops, it can be confusing coming down to earth, and a shock to be back in the grip of the mundane weirdness of life lived on phones.

So it's no wonder then that Michell—a gifted visual artist who recently collaborated with Chan Poling on his first children's book, *Jack & the Ghost*—had some modern angst in her subconscious as she started writing the songs for what would become Little Fevers' new album, *Strangers*, which plays in part like an artful reaction to our disconnection due to so much connection via screens. Hello, stranger.

"It's funny, because we didn't name the album until we had to get it printed, and

DAYTIME PEOPLE IN A DAYDREAM NATION

On *Strangers*, Little Fevers make post-zombie apocalypse music to connect the disconnected



ZOE PRINDS-FLASH

I was going through the songs and going, 'What are all these songs about?'" says Michell. "And it kind of dawned on me: 'Oh, this is a total observation of people I don't know.' So *Strangers* is sort of a take on strangers."

"It's sort of observing my world in a way I kind of haven't before. Like, we moved into this house about a year and a half ago, and I feel like I observe a lot of people in my neighborhood and I always wonder, 'What do these people all do during the day?' It's this imagined life of these people I don't know, and most of the album is based on

those observations. It's also about social media and all that, but that part I don't love. I would much rather not know anything about people and think about them in a different way; in a way that I think, as opposed to actually knowing, which isn't as fun."

Songs like "Clear Night," "Cars," "All Alone," and "Stranger Romance" brim with catchy hooks, soulful vocals, and noise-rock guitar that wouldn't sound out of place on a 4AD, Bar/None, or Coyote Records compilation. Highlights include the wondering, wandering anthem "Daytime People" and the artist's/lover's

LITTLE FEVERS

release party for *Strangers*
with Har-Di-Har and Matt Latterell
Cedar Cultural Center, Minneapolis
7 p.m. December 20

lament "Hunter," while much of the rest harkens to a time when people and life were more mysterious.

"Now you know everything about everyone," says Michell. "I don't want to know everything you did today. I want to imagine it. I want to imagine that you live in a big, beautiful place and it's full of art, but really it's not like that. 'All Alone' is sort of my take on.... We play this upbeat music, and no one would dance, or move, or even act like they were interested at all. Which is very disheartening as a musician and performer, so I sort of wrote that song as kind of like a 'fuck you!' Like, come on! This is supposed to be fun. We're moving, we're having a good time, and look at you, you're just sitting on your phone. You're not even looking up or even interacting with the people around you. So it's kind of an observation of a general public that we've experienced. It's not one person, but it's almost like a zombie movement."

Lucky for careful listeners, Michell's warm and whimsical voice is an inviting campfire to gather around, which makes the band and *Strangers* soar.

"What's cool is that we look at each other, and interact with each other, which is not something that we do all day. It's like a breath of fresh air, to do it," says Michell. "When I play with Eamonn and [drummer] Geoff [Freeman] and [guitarist] Paul [Puleo], especially because we don't get a ton of time to play together, when we do, everything clicks and you feel so good and it's just fun to play music with each other. There's just something to be said about really taking the time with your friends to work through these songs, songs that you really care about and spend time on."

"These songs feel really special, and it feels really special to have a crew of people that you feel so connected to, where you make eye contact and you work together, and on stage it's a feeling that's like no other. I crave that, and I need it. We have to do it. It sounds crazy, but we need to do it."

"So as hard as it's been to make Little Fevers a real thing, we've just kept going at it, with babies and everything else, because it's a necessity. And with this album, it's just like a relief for us. It just makes us want to get in that van and put out more music, and more music, and more music."

THE CEDAR
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Friday, December 20th
The Cedar and 89.3 The Current Present
LITTLE FEVERS ALBUM RELEASE
with Har-Di-Har and Matt Latterell
Doors 7PM / Show 8PM / All Ages / Standing / \$12 ADV / \$15 DOS

Saturday, December 21st
The Cedar Presents
THE FIXX: 2019 FIXXMAS TOUR
with Royston Langdon and DJ Jake Rudh
Doors 7PM / Show 8PM / All Ages / Seated / \$30 ADV / \$35 DOS

Friday, December 21st
The Cedar Presents
DOSH
with MAKR and The Nunnerly
Doors 7PM / Show 8PM / All Ages / Standing Show / \$15 ADV / \$20 DOS

Saturday, December 28th and Tuesday, December 31st
The Cedar Presents
LIZZ WINSTEAD IN SNARKNADO X
A Hilarious Look Back at the Year and Decade
with Sam Breckenridge
Saturday Matinee Doors 1PM / Show 2PM
Evening Doors 6:30pm / Show 7:30pm
All Ages / Seated / \$50 ADV / \$60 DOS / \$70 VIP

Thursday, January 9th
The Cedar Presents
LE VENT DU NORD
with Uskudar Eclectic
Doors 7PM / Show 7:30PM / All Ages / Seated / \$18 ADV / \$22 DOS

Thursday, January 16th
The Cedar Presents
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IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (1946)

Sunday, December 21 || 8:00 pm
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Monday, December 23 || 7:00 pm
PAUL METSA: HOLIDAY ON ICE CUBES
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Thursday, December 26 || 8:00 pm
LOVE, ACTUALLY (2003)
w. Composer & Musician Daniel Nass

Friday, December 27 || 8:00 pm
THE HONEYDOGS
w. Ava Bella Levy

Saturday, December 28 || 8:00 pm
AN EVENING WITH PAVIELLE

Tuesday, December 31 || 9:00 pm
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MUSIC



MARC ROBERGE

VARSITY THEATER, WEDNESDAY 12.18
With O.A.R., Marc Roberge writes slick, buttery, tropical party songs, streamlining reggae, roots revival, and worldbeat into a sort of pan-generic beach music. He's built a substantial live audience by touring constantly and releasing countless concert albums; live, O.A.R.'s tighter songs on record unfold into expansive jams. 7 p.m. \$39-\$55+. 1308 Fourth St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-604-0222. —LUCAS FAGEN

DIAMOND RIO

TREASURE ISLAND RESORT & CASINO, SATURDAY 12.21
Originally founded as a musical attraction at Nashville's Opryland USA amusement park before evolving into a full-fledged band, Diamond Rio have been polishing their style of jolly, ritzy neotraditionalist country-rock for three decades. Their "Meet in the Middle" is one of country's original centrist "both sides" anthems, only cutesier because it's about a marriage. 12+. 8 p.m. \$22.50+. 5734 Sturgeon Lake Rd., Welch; 800-222-7077. —LUCAS FAGEN

THE FIXX

CEDAR CULTURAL CENTER, SATURDAY 12.21
Aging dandies celebrate the holidays too, you know. Since mock solemnity is the whole point of the Fixx's flashy, stylized, hard rock-inflected new wave, one struggles to imagine how such deadpan doomsayers will celebrate "music, merriment, humanity, and the true spirit of Christmas," but as the song says, one thing leads to another. With Royston Langdon and DJ Jake Rudh. 7 p.m. \$30/\$35. 416 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-338-2674. —LUCAS FAGEN

GEORGE WINSTON

ORCHESTRA HALL, SUNDAY 12.22
George Winston has an uncanny Thomas Kinkadee-like ability to drench music in rosy hues whose point of origin remains mysterious—from Bach to ragtime, melodies that don't usually sound nostalgic and wistful become so when he plays them. Is it his subtle yet copious use of the echo pedal? The New Age pianist's new Restless Wind includes interpretations of Sam Cooke, Buffalo Springfield, and the Doors. 7:30 p.m. \$45-\$55. 1111 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis; 612-371-5600. —LUCAS FAGEN

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SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 • 10PM
The Assortment w/ DJ Michael Grey: Winter Dance Party!

SUNDAY DECEMBER 22 • 8PM
The Toxenes LP Release w/ Low Rats, Products, DJ R'Monkey

THURSDAY DECEMBER 26 • 9PM
Lazy Scorsese, Mostly Trees, Frederick the First, Kara Marell

UPCOMING SHOWS

DEC 27. Think Fast! Improvised Freestyle Standup

DEC 27. The Arrivals, Murf, Green/Blue, Din-Din holiday Escape Show

DEC 28. Self-Evident, Goodnight Gorillas, Kentucky Gag Order, Cola Horse

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

>> By Rob Brezsny

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19): The English word "hubris" means prideful, exaggerated self-assurance. In the HBO TV series *Rome*, the ancient Roman politician and general Mark Antony says to his boss, Julius Caesar, "I'm glad you're so confident. Some would call it hubris." Caesar has a snappy comeback: "It's only hubris if I fail." I'm tempted to dare you to use you that as one of your mottos in 2020, Aries. I have a rather expansive vision of your capacity to accomplish great things during the coming months. And I also think that one key to your triumphs and breakthroughs will be your determination to cultivate a well-honed aplomb, even audacity.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20): For years I've lived in a house bordering a wetland, and I've come to love that ecosystem more than any other. While communing with reeds and herons and muddy water, my favorite poet has been Taurus-born Lorine Niedecker, who wrote about marshes with supreme artistry. Until the age of 60, her poetic output was less than abundant because she had to earn a meager living by cleaning hospital floors. Then, due to a fortuitous shift in circumstances, she was able to leave that job and devote more time to what she loved most and did best. With Niedecker's breakthrough as our inspiration, I propose that we do all we can, you and I, as we conspire to make 2020 the year you devote more time to the activity that you love most and do best.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20): In the English language, the prefix "re" comes at the beginning of many words with potent transformational meaning: reinvent; redeem; rediscover; release; relieve; redesign; resurrect; rearrange; reconstruct; reform; reanimate; reawaken; regain. I hope you'll put words like those at the top of your priority list in 2020. If you hope to take maximum advantage of the cosmic currents, it'll be a year of revival, realignment, and restoration.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22): I won't be surprised if you're enamored and amorous more than usual in 2020. I suspect you will experience delight and enchantment at an elevated rate. The intensity and depth of the feelings that flow through you may break all your previous records. Is that going to be a problem? I suppose it could be if you worry that the profuse flows of tenderness and affection will render you weak and vulnerable. But if you're willing and eager to interpret your extra sensitivity as a superpower, that's probably what it will be.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Does the word "spirit" mean anything to you? Or are you numb to it? Has it come to seem virtually meaningless—a foggy abstraction used carelessly by millions of people to express sentimental beliefs and avoid clear thinking? In accordance with astrological omens, I'll ask you to create a sturdier and more vigorous definition of "spirit" for your practical use in 2020. For instance, you might decide that "spirit" refers to the life force that launches you out of bed each morning and motivates you to keep transforming yourself into the ever-more beautiful soul you want to become.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "There are people who take the heart out of you, and there are people who put it back," wrote author Charles de Lint. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, your heart will encounter far more of the latter than the former types of people in 2020. There may be one wrangler who tries to take the heart out of you, but there will be an array of nurturers who will strive to keep the heart in you—as well as boosters and builders who will add even more heart.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Composer Igor Stravinsky was born a Russian citizen, but later in life became a French citizen, and still later took on American citizenship. If you have had any similar predilections, Libra, I'm guessing they won't be in play during 2020. My prediction is that you will develop a more robust sense of where you belong than ever before. Any uncertainties you'd had about where your true power spot lies will dissipate. Questions you've harbored about the nature of home will be answered. With flair and satisfaction, you'll resolve long-running riddles about home and community.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "Friendship is a very taxing and arduous form of leisure activity," wrote philosopher and educator Mortimer Adler. He was exaggerating a bit for comic effect, but he was basically correct. We all must mobilize a great deal of intelligence and hard work to initiate new friendships and maintain existing friendships. But I have some very good news about how these activities will play out for you in 2020, Scorpio. I expect that your knack for practicing the art of friendship will be at an all-time high. I also believe that your close alliances will be especially gratifying and useful for you. You'll be well-rewarded for your skill and care at cultivating rapport.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): In 1933, Sagittarian artist Diego Rivera was commissioned to paint a huge mural in one of the famous Rockefeller buildings in New York City. His patrons didn't realize he was planning to include a controversial portrait of former Soviet Communist leader Vladimir Lenin. When the deed was done, they ordered him to remove it. When he refused, they ushered him out and destroyed the whole mural. As a result, Rivera also lost another commission to create art at the Chicago World's Fair. In any other year, Sagittarius, I might encourage you to be as idealistic as Rivera. I'd invite you to place artistic integrity over financial considerations. But I'm less inclined to advise that in 2020. I think it may serve you to be unusually pragmatic. At least consider leaving Lenin out of your murals.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "People mistake their limitations for high standards," wrote Capricorn author Jean Toomer. In my astrological opinion, it's crucial that you avoid doing that in 2020. Why? First, I'm quite sure that you will have considerable power to shed and transcend at least some of your limitations. For best results, you can't afford to deceive yourself into thinking that those limitations are high standards. Secondly, Capricorn, you will have good reasons and a substantial ability to raise your standards higher than they've ever been. So you definitely don't want to confuse high standards with limitations.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Historians once thought that 14th-century Englishmen were the first humans to track the rhythms of the planet Jupiter using the complicated mathematics known as calculus. But in 2015, researchers discovered that Babylonians had done it 1,400 years before the Englishmen. Why was Jupiter's behavior so important to those ancient people? They were astrologers! They believed the planet's movements were correlated with practical events on Earth, like the weather, river levels, and grain harvests. I think that this correction in the origin story of tracking Jupiter's rhythms will be a useful metaphor for you in 2020. It's likely you will come to understand your past in ways that are different from what you've believed up until now. Your old tales will change.

♈ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): China produces the most apples in the world. The United States is second. That wasn't always true. When Europeans first reached the shores of the New World, crab apple was the only apple species that grew natively. But the invaders planted other varieties that they brought with them. They also imported the key to all future proliferation: honeybees, champion pollinators, which were previously absent from the land that many indigenous people called Turtle Island. I see 2020 as a time for you to accomplish the equivalent, in your own sphere, of getting the pollination you need. What are the fertilizing influences that will help you accomplish your goals?

freewillastrology@freewillastrology.com

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331club

wed : december 18

7pm : "kfai house party presents"

tony euchetti band

9:30pm : lenz & frenz

(certain members of pert near sandstone, farmhouse band, san souci quartet, row of ducks)

thurs : december 19

9:30pm : cross pollination

fri : december 20

7pm : laura and sean's movie and music trivia

10pm : serious machine, butter boys, pinched, kat kirschmann

sat : december 21

7pm : trivia mafia presents 331 drinkin' spelling bee

10pm : the party crashers, alina maira, syvers

sun : december 22

3-5pm : experience room #12, jim dankert

8pm : trivia mafia

mon : december 23

8pm : the roe family singers

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METAL BANDS

BY BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

Across

- 1 SPOILER ALERT: They do Santa's work
- 6 Irish watering hole
- 9 Winner's take
- 14 St. Teresa's home
- 15 São Paulo-to-Rio dir.
- 16 Shaped like a volcano
- 17 List of those working toward their Masters?
- 20 Avocado ____
- 21 Pickling ingredient
- 22 Second-row window seat
- 23 Family name of "Vacation" movies
- 26 Make some ratings
- 28 Verizon CEO Vestberg
- 29 Germanic cry
- 30 Guy Fawkes representation, e.g.
- 33 Double-LP sleeve format
- 38 Nit to pick
- 39 Jewish grunt
- 40 "Ask me in a bit"
- 41 Flips out
- 43 Pizzeria best sellers
- 44 Poetical activity
- 45 Drummer's job
- 46 Grille protector
- 50 Baptism V.I.P.
- 54 On the safe side when sailing
- 55 Noisy ruckus
- 57 Japanese pond critter
- 58 "12 Days of Christmas" gift, and hint to this puzzle's theme
- 62 Christmas party, e.g.
- 63 Valuable stone
- 64 Often-swiped novel

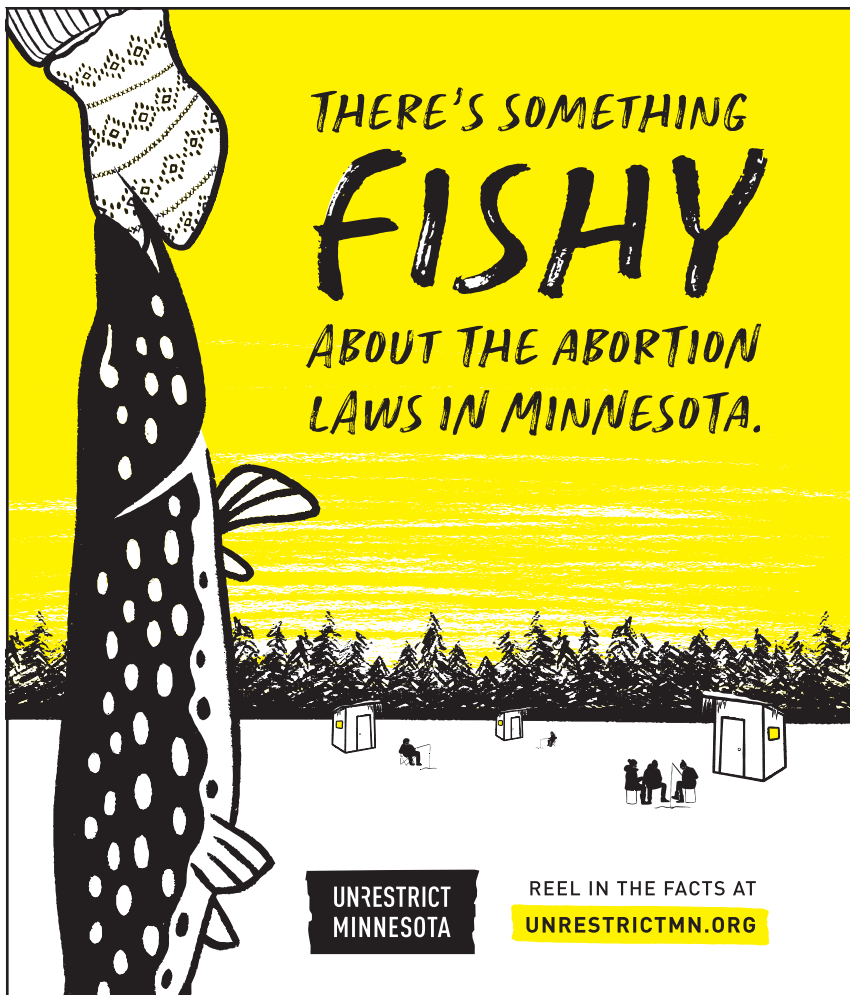
Down

- 1 Gog's partner in Revelations
- 2 To have, in Paris
- 3 Frauds ____ Vanilli
- 4 Alien from Melmac
- 5 Volcano of "Impractical Jokers"
- 6 They're clutched by the mortified
- 7 Typed Ctrl-Z, say
- 8 "I've ____ thinking..."
- 9 Toxic compound banned since the 1970s
- 10 Dye job giveaway
- 11 Stunned
- 12 Round numbers?
- 13 Historical works involving Aegir and Bragi
- 18 Key material
- 19 Do something!
- 24 Uses UPS
- 25 Engage in fighting
- 27 Defeat definitively
- 29 Relaxed comment
- 30 Early bird?
- 31 Do teased with a pick
- 32 Ancient oath
- 33 Test with five subjects
- 34 Apostle's belief
- 35 Like Claritin and Robitussin
- 36 Actress Greta of "Russian Doll"

- 37 Test administrators?: Abbr.
- 39 Jamie's co-worker in Progressive ads
- 42 Hells Canyon home
- 43 Family vehicle
- 45 "La ____" (opera that starts on Christmas Eve)
- 46 Places to do crosswords, or maybe write poetry
- 47 Still kicking
- 48 Party hearty
- 49 Fashion's Geoffrey
- 50 Austro-Hungarian logician Kurt
- 51 "Don't remind me"
- 52 Fire up Insta, say
- 53 Box set components
- 56 2018 Literature Nobelist Tokarczuk
- 59 Certain Mustangs
- 60 Hot color
- 61 Nigerian language

Last Week's Answer

A	B	B	R		B	U	M	P		D	Y	E	D
C	O	L	A		I	S	I	A	H		R	U	L
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B	U	N	N	Y		U	G	H		S	L	O	P
I	C	E		A	Z	E	R	I	S		A	R	E
T	B	I	L	I	S	I		Z	E	S	T	E	R
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E	D	G	E		W	O	N	K	A		D	E	K
D	I	S	S		L	O	O	K		A	N	E	W



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Bloody Business

Why can't doctors help with my bloody spunk problem?



Dan Savage

I'm a 60-year-old heterosexual man, and I am being told that I'm normal. I have been to several urologists, and they say I have no medical issues. But I'm having a hard time buying it, because for the last six months, my ejaculate has been extremely bloody. This is embarrassing, especially since oral sex has always been my favorite. The urologists' explanation is that as you get older, there are blood vessels within the penis that can break during an erection. They gave me some pills to ensure there was no infection, but told me I'll probably have to use condoms for the rest of my life. My partner doesn't need contraceptives, so we haven't used condoms for decades. If I were bleeding out of any other orifice, there would be a team of doctors helping me. Is there really no hope?

TELL ME IT AIN'T SO

"Hematospermia—blood in the ejaculate—is usually not considered a big deal, in the sense that the vast majority of the time it's not a sign of cancer," said Dr. Ashley Winter, a board-certified urologist, the cohost of *The Full Release* podcast. "I'd want to know how much he's actually bleeding and what they've done to check him out. But that said, sometimes a guy with a large prostate will bleed with orgasm."

"But in a case like TMIAS's, where the issue is ongoing and the subject is over 55," said Dr. Winter, "a typical evaluation would include a PSA blood test (a prostate cancer screening test), as well as testing for STIs, along with a urinalysis to check for blood in the urine and urinary infections. If those tests were not revealing, I would consider doing an ultrasound or MRI of the prostate and surrounding organs, as well as putting a camera up the urethra (called cystoscopy) to check out the plumbing."

Assuming you've had all those tests and the doctors found no sign of cancer or infection, then what the hell is going on?

"Typically, the cause would be something such as dilated blood vessels along the ejaculate exit route," aka the urethra, the tube that connects the outside world (and all those piss bottoms) to your bladder. Men ejaculate through it (and some women do, too!)—it runs through the prostate gland, a gland that produces about a third of the

seminal fluid. An enlarged prostate squeezes the urethra, which can make urination difficult and uncomfortable, and can also result in—you guessed it—blood in the semen.

One possible "fix" is a transurethral resection of the prostate, which basically amounts to "a 'roto-rootering' of the prostate," as Dr. Winter vividly put it. A doctor shoves something called a resectoscope up your urethra and slices away chunks of prostate tissue.

"The problem with these procedures is that they can cause a person to stop ejaculating at all," said Dr. Winter. "So if TMIAS has already had a fairly robust evaluation, then either using condoms or just having his sex partner adapt to the presence of blood may be the best solution. And in the absence of an infection, shooting a bloody load into your partner is not dangerous. Couples have intercourse during menstruation without harm, and plenty of F-F couples have sex during menstruation as well."

But hold on and back up and wait just a goddamned minute: Didn't your doctors say everything looked normal? Doesn't that mean your prostate isn't enlarged?

"A 'normal' prostate generally means that it is not cancerous and normal in size for your age," said Dr. Winter. "As you get older, your prostate gets bigger. So it's highly probable that what TMIAS has is a big-ass-but-normal-for-his-age prostate. And bigger prostates tend to have larger blood vessels lining the urethra and are therefore more likely to bleed when he experiences those lovely contractions associated with orgasm. When TMIAS was told that 'there are blood vessels within the penis that can break,' I suspect his doc was referring to this and was trying to simplify the explanation."

While the presence of blood in your ejaculate may not be normal or ideal, TMIAS, it's likely your normal, and there's nothing your doctor—or a team of them—can do about it.

"Sometimes a lack of a 'fix' is not dismissiveness, it's just an admittance that a lot of things medical folks do/offer aren't perfect," said Dr. Winter.

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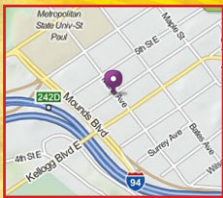


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